THE

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

Vol. XLI. Wednesday, August 15, 1849. No. 2.

ON THE USE OF GLYCERINE IN DISEASES OF THE EAR.

BY THOMAS H. WAKLEY, ESQ., SURGEON TO THE ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL, LONDON.

The anxiety which is always manifested by the public to take advantage of any new discovery or successful mode of treatment connected with the removal of disease, affords a strong proof of the confidence which is generally entertained by the community in the power of medicine as it is practised in this country. In this respect a marked difference is shown in the conduct of the professional and non-professional portion of society. This is not extraordinary, as afflicted persons naturally seek for the readiest mode of obtaining relief. The medical practitioner, on the contrary, first considers the rationality of any proposed method of effecting a cure. His studies have taught him to reflect and to reason, and the results of experience have admonished him not to form conclusions too hastily, or to generalize too widely from restricted data. But it must not be inferred, because the medical practitioner is less prompt than the public in resorting to the aid of a new agent, that his confidence in the powers of the healing art is less forcible, or is less deeply fixed in the foundations of his judgment, than is that of the non-professional community; on the contrary, the confidence which he feels is not the offspring of an unreflecting, ill-sustained faith—it is not a weak superstructure, raised upon the narrow basis of a single fact, but arises from, and is sustained by, the broad and solid foundations of science, reason and experience. It is well for society and the progress of knowledge that the minds of medical practitioners are thus trained and disciplined; for if it were a custom with them, without hesitation and reflection, to adopt and sanction every newly-announced successful plan of treating diseases, the subsequent failures, in a great majority of the novel plans, would soon destroy all confidence in the practice of medicine, not only in the public mind, but amongst physicians and surgeons themselves. Probably one of the causes which has tended in a great degree to establish and sustain the confidence of the community in the practice of medicine, has been the judicious caution which practitioners of eminence have exercised before they have resorted to new means of cure; and secondly, the candor and integrity which they have so often displayed in publishing the results of their experiments and experience. It is honorably felt that much deliberation and caution is due alike to a noble science, to the just claims of society, and to the exalted character of a dignified profession. If every example of the successful treatment of disease, by a new remedy, were to be published, the minds of practitioners, if not strongly fortified by previous study, and habits of thoughtful investigation, would become in danger of being involved in confusion by the dazzling announcements of numberless triumphant experimentalists. It is therefore forcibly felt by the profession, that before a new mode of treating disease be recommended, something more substantial than speculation or hypothesis should be available to warrant its adoption. Reflections of this kind have induced me to pause for a very considerable period before I determined respectfully to submit to the consideration of the profession, the humble pretensions which I am desirous of establishing for *glycerine* in the treatment of certain forms of deafness. The strong conviction which I entertain as to the utility and value of this remedy is the only apology I can offer for claiming, even for a moment, the attention of the profession on such a subject. I have no new doctrine to inculcate; no new discovery in physiology to enforce; no "great fact" in pathology to disclose. The sum total of my aim on this occasion is, to contribute a fact to our therapeutic store, which although it may be regarded by some as a very insignificant item, is one which I think ought to be very generally known. I have already adverted to the confidence felt by the public in the capabilities of medicine, as a practical science, and to the eagerness shown by society to take advantage of any newly-announced medical or surgical remedy. Unfortunately, that unsuspecting desire to seize, with blind faith and hope, on any new proposal for curing disease, is, in this country, the fertile source and support of all those partial, detached and empirical systems of practice, which are, and ever must be, denounced and repudiated by every well-educated practitioner.

The medical officers connected with the public institutions of this vast metropolis command the most ample opportunities of observing the strong tendencies of the public feeling with respect to the adoption of new remedies. Scarcely is a new fact of any importance connected with the cure of disease published in the periodical journals, when the "out patients" at the public hospitals make the proposed remedy the subject of common conversation amongst them. Frequently, the applicants for relief even ask to be treated on the "new plan," and sometimes they request to be given some of the "new medicine."

One of the most striking instances of the lively effect produced by the first announcement of a "new plan" of treatment, was afforded, in the summer of last year, by the publication, in the Lancet for July 1, 1848, of the first of a series of valuable papers by Mr. Yearsley, entitled, "On a New Mode of Treating Deafness." Immediately after the appearance of those papers, an influx of a new class of patients was observable at the Royal Free Hospital. The members of that new class of persons were afflicted with deafness, and often was the remark made by them, "I wish, if you please, to be treated upon the new plan;" or the question was asked, "if there had not been discovered a cure for deafness?" Such inquiries from patients suffering under actual disease, many of whom stated that they were deprived of the means of obtaining a livelihood, in consequence of their infirmities, suggested the questions—"What ought the surgeons of a public general hospital to do, under such circumstances?" "Ought these patients to be rejected at this place, and transferred to the institutions specially devoted to diseases of the ear?" It appeared to be just that the patients should be received.

Accordingly, I resolved to attempt to confer a benefit on the applicants, by adopting and following out the plan of treatment recommended by Mr. Yearsley; and this resolution was carried into practice with results which rapidly increased the number of expectant patients.

During the existence of the first flush of success, the value of Mr. Yearsley's new method of treatment may have been over-estimated. This was not his fault; and the fact cannot be disputed, that Mr. Yearsley openly and candidly submitted his views to the notice of the profession. However, it happened that poor patients, in considerable numbers, claimed, at the portals of the public hospitals, to be recipients of the advantages of the new discovery, and I then thought, and still think, that it would have been ungracious and unfeeling to have rudely directed the sufferers to apply elsewhere for relief.

The adoption of the plan of treatment recommended by Mr. Yearsley was an appropriate recognition of the value of his labors. The success which attended the use of the simple operation which he recommended was, as I have already remarked, very striking in the first instance. In several cases, the effect of the application of the wetted cotton, in which the tympanum had been perforated by ulceration, was even extraordinary. But it too frequently happened, that the relief obtained was of an ephemeral duration. On applying the wetted cotton, the power of hearing, in several instances, which had been lost for a very long period, was instantaneously restored—an event which excited the most profound astonishment in the minds of patients and their friends. Too soon, however, was it perceived that the newly-acquired power gradually subsided, and the sense of hearing returned to its previous imperfect condition. The relapse frequently produced a feeling of dejection in the spirits and hopes of the patient which it was painful to witness. The benefit derived from the application, in the first instance, was undoubted, and could not be mistaken:—hence arose the question—Why was it of so evanescent a character? This inquiry naturally suggested a minute investigation into the nature of the materials employed, and also their immediate and remote influence on the parts to which they were applied. A brief investigation, a few experiments, and an attentive consideration of the subject, induced me to attribute all the conferred advantages to the effects produced by the water, and to reject the cotton, as nearly, if not entirely, useless. It even appeared that after the water had evaporated, the retained dry cotton became an additional impediment to the function of hearing. What was to be done? What were the indications which such facts seemed to establish? Evidently the use of some agent, which, by offering a successful resistance to evaporation, should retain its moisture, and continue to lubricate the auditory canal. Clearly enough, it was from the moisture that the benefit was obtained, and from a continuance of the moisture was the advantage to be prolonged. On duly considering all that I had observed, it appeared to me that *glycerine* was the only agent which was at all likely to accomplish the object I had in view. After consulting with Mr. Lloyd Bullock, of Conduit street, relative to the composition and properties of glycerine, my opinion as to the propriety of giving it a trial was confirmed; and Mr. Bullock kindly manufactured for me a small quantity of that preparation in its purest form. This portion I obtained from Mr. Bullock in the first week of August, 1848, and employed it immediately in several cases, with apparently the most complete success. One of the patients, aged 19 years, was a relative of Mr. Braithwaite, the celebrated engineer. In this instance, the deafness had existed from infancy. They were the first I had treated with the new agent. In all these patients the wetted cotton had failed to produce a lasting benefit. Two of the four patients are now completely cured; and the other two are so far recovered as only to find it necessary to resort to the glycerine at distant intervals. The success of the new remedy, in these and many other instances, has attracted much notice; and I have now used the glycerine in upwards of three hundred cases of deafness. On many occasions it has been employed without any advantage whatever. In other instances the benefit was considerable for a short time, and then disappeared. In numerous cases, however, by the use of it, the power of hearing has been completely restored. It was only after much experience in the application of glycerine, and from observing its action in a great number of cases, that it could be ascertained what were those conditions of the ear in which it was most likely to prove of advantage. Contrary to what might have been anticipated, the use of the remedy was successful in persons in whom the deafness had been of many years' duration—one, for example, thirty years; and also in cases where the existence of the malady could be traced to the eruptive fevers of childhood. In instances of deafness caused by inflammation, followed first by suppuration, and then by a horny, dry condition of the auditory canal, the application of glycerine has been attended with signal advantage. Equally marked and peculiar is the success when it is used in cases where there is a partial or total absence of ceruminous secretion. In many instances of deafness belonging to these classes of cases, the employment of glycerine has been followed by a perfect restoration of the power of hearing. In other examples of deafness, where the membrana tympani had evidently become thickened and hardened, and on examination with the speculum, denoted a whitish or pearly appearance, the use of the glycerine was followed by strikingly beneficial and gratifying effects. It is evident, therefore, that the application of glycerine is equally admissible, whether the tympanum be in a sound state, or whether it has been destroyed by ulceration.

A description of the composition and properties of glycerine, abridged from Turner's "Elements of Chemistry," may not be uninteresting on this occasion.

Glycerine was discovered by Scheele, and Chevreul proved its exact composition and constitution. Its formula is, $C_6\ H_7\ O_5 + aq$. It is found in fatty oils combined with oleic, stearic, and margaric acids; its specific gravity is 1.252. Glycerine is a syrupy liquid, miscible both with alcohol and water, insoluble in ether, slightly inflammable, inodorous, and of a sweet taste.

The most convenient mode of preparing it is by the saponification of olive oil, by means of litharge and a little water. Sulphuric acid will separate the oily matters, leaving an aqueous solution containing the alkaline salt along with the glycerine. The mixture is evaporated to dryness, and treated with alcohol, which again dissolves the glycerine, and leaves the alkaline sulphate undissolved. The glycerine may be purified from oxide of lead, by passing through it a current of sulphuretted hydrogen. —*London Lancet.*

[A number of cases, appended by Mr. Wakley, are omitted for want of room. For Mr. Yearsley's treatment, see Vol. 39, this Journal.]

NOVEL EFFECTS OF POTASSIUM—FOREIGN BODIES IN THE URETHRA—CATALEPSY.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

A FEW months ago I was called in great haste to a young gentleman, who was in a most ludicrous yet painful condition. I found, on examination, a bottle, holding about a pint, with a short neck and small mouth, firmly attached to his body by the penis, which was drawn through the neck and projected into the bottle, being swollen and purple. The bottle, which was a white one, with a ground-glass stopper and perfectly transparent, had an opening of three fourths of an inch in diameter only; and the penis being much swollen rendered its extraction utterly impossible. The patient was greatly frightened, and so urgent for its removal that he would give me no account of its getting into its present novel situation, but implored me to liberate it instantly, as the pain was intense and the mental anguish and fright intolerable. Seeing no hopes of getting an explanation in his present predicament, and after endeavoring to pull the penis out with my fingers, without success, I seized a large knife lying on the table, and with the back of it I struck a blow on the neck of the bottle, shivering it to atoms and liberating the penis in an instant, much to the delight of the terrified youth. The glans penis was enormously swollen and black, as was the prepuce; both were vesicated, as though scalding water or fire had been applied to them. He complained of smarting and pain in the penis, after the bottle was removed; and inflammation, swelling and discoloration continued for a number of days, but by scarification and cold applications, subsided; yet not without great apprehensions on the part of the patient, and a good degree of real pain in the penis.

The reader is probably anxious to know, by this time, how a penis, belonging to a live man, found its way into so unusual a place as the mouth of a bottle. I was extremely curious myself; but the fright and perturbation of the patient's mind, and his apprehensions of losing his penis entirely, either by the burn, swelling, inflammation, or by my cutting it off to get it out of the bottle, all came upon him at once, and overwhelmed him with fear. Now for the explanation. A bottle in which some potassium had been kept in naphtha, and which had been used up in experiments, was standing in his room; and wishing to urinate without leaving his room, he pulled out the glass stopper and applied his penis to its mouth. The first jet of urine was followed by an explosive sound and flash of fire, and quick as thought the penis was drawn into the bottle with a force and tenacity which held it as firmly as if in a vice. The burning of the potassium created a vacuum instantaneously, and the soft yielding tissue of the penis effectually excluding the air, the bottle acted like a huge cupping glass to this novel portion of the system. The small size of the mouth of the bottle compressed the veins, while the arteries continued to pour their blood into the glans, prepuce, &c. From this cause, and the rarefied air in the bottle, the parts swelled and puffed up to an enormous size.

How much potassium was in the bottle at the time is not known, but it is probable that but a few grains were left, and those broken off from some of the larger globules, and so small as to have escaped the man's observation. I was anxious to test the matter (though not with the same *instruments* which the patient had done), and for that purpose took a few small particles of potassium, mixed with about a tea-spoonful of naphtha, and placed them in a pint bottle. Then I introduced some urine with a dash, while the end of one of my fingers was inserted into the mouth of the bottle, but not so tightly as to completely close it, and the result was a loud explosion like a percussion cap, and the finger was drawn forcibly into the bottle and held there strongly—thus verifying, in some degree, this highly interesting philosophical experiment, which so frightened my friend and patient.

The novelty of this accident is my apology for spending so many words in reporting it, while its ludicrous character will, perhaps, excite a smile; but it was anything but a joke at the time to the poor sufferer, who imagined in his fright that if his penis was not already ruined, breaking the bottle to liberate it would endanger its integrity by the broken spiculæ cutting or lacerating the parts.

Accidents frequently occur to young men, who, to gratify a morbid propensity, introduce substances into the urethra, which sometimes slip beyond their reach, find their way into the bladder, and prove fatal.

The following incident is somewhat interesting, as it illustrates one of these cases. On dissecting a subject a few years ago, in the Indiana Medical College, a calculus was found, one and a fourth inch in length and three fourths of an inch in diameter—rough on its outside, but in shape resembling an egg. No satisfactory history of his case was obtained at the time. In performing the operation of lithotomy before the class, on the dead subject, this calculus was employed. In one instance, on removing it with the forceps, I accidentally crushed it, and found the end of a lead pencil sticking out at one extremity. It was a little over an inch in length, and made of red cedar, which on cutting still exhaled the peculiar odor of that wood. A small lead was in the centre, and one end of the wood was sharpened, the other cut off square. A few days after this, a young medical student brought me the annexed history. Three years and six months previous to the death of a young man, 20 years of age, he being in company with a lad of his own age in the woods, introduced this pencil point first into the orifice of the urethra, to gratify a morbid appetite, and it slipped away from his fingers beyond his reach. Being much terrified, he kept working at it, but the outward end being squarely cut off, would not come out, but worked backwards into the bladder, when it ceased to trouble him. Twelve months afterwards he began to experience difficulty in urinating; but called on no physician until the lapse of eight months. This physician discovered stone in the bladder, and advised him to have lithotomy performed. But about this time a Uroscopian was consulted, who, after wisely peeping into a vial of his urine, made the discovery of simple liver disease, and under his treatment he died—it being from three to three and a half years from the introduction of the pencil. He never, from first to last, disclosed the accident to his physicians; but the young man who was with him at the time of the occurrence gave the history, as he was a confidant of the patient.

Foreign bodies will sometimes get into the urethra and bladder in a strange and unaccountable manner, especially into the female urethra. A student of medicine, or rather a man who had practised medicine in the West a number of years, brought me a stone the size and shape of a pigeon's egg, which he declared he had extracted from the urethra of a female. It had lodged in the urethra an inch from the external orifice, obstructing the urine and causing great distress. He had not the least doubt of its being a calculus, formed in the bladder originally. As soon as I saw it I was convinced that it was formed in some lime-stone quarry originally, and found its way into the urethra from without—the why and the when best known to the patient. On expressing my opinion to the owner of the pebble, he was disposed to be crabbed, and was for a hot dispute; when, to convince him, I had him view the stone through a microscope, and lo! it was plainly seen to be composed of minute fossil shells—evidence conclusive that it was never formed in the bladder. On a more minute and particular examination, the fact was elicited that the female alluded to was one of those strange, hysterical beings, whose minds are of a perverted cast, and who are always having anomalous and out-of-the-way disorders.

An illustration of the value of the microscope as a diagnostic means, was had in the case of a female who was subject to catalepsy, somnambulism, hysteria, mesmerism, and a long catalogue of strange and anomalous affections. One of the most tangible of her intangible difficulties was the passage of large quantities of gravel, sand and pebbles from the urethra. It was said that *quarts* of these had passed her from time to time; and that no mistake in this matter might arise, the catheter would detect them while in the urethra and bladder. I procured half a gill of these gravel stones, and their physical qualities were precisely like clean water-worn stones, selected from a gravel bank or the brook. Examination of them chemically, showed them to consist of heterogeneous substances

—lime, silicious, and fossiliferous kinds. And the microscope plainly exhibited some of them to contain minute shells and coralline formations. After this, the intelligent reader may guess, at least, *how* the substances got into the bladder. Her physician, who is a gentleman of skill and intelligence, believed them to have been formed in the bladder or kidneys. They were at times detected in her stools; but as she strained much, and sat over a vessel, her attendants were not certain but these came also from the urethra. The history of this female would furnish a tissue of as strange and extraordinary circumstances as that of Jane Rider, Rachel Baker, or any other of the like stamp, which are on record; and as I have copious notes, I may some day furnish them entire for publication. These cases are better understood at this day than formerly; yet there are instances where these persons not only deceive others but themselves likewise—a species of moral insanity, which prompts them to do things totally inconsistent with reason and their own principles. If this female introduces these foreign bodies into her urethra, and at times swallows some of them, it is done in a paroxysm of intellectual or moral perversion, unknown to her in her more lucid intervals.

A few years ago it was my fortune, or rather misfortune, to have under my care a female patient who labored under this perversion of mind, and she had the most strange and contradictory kind of diseases, mostly affecting the genito-urinary organs. One day it would be an inability of retaining her urine; the next, perhaps, retention, requiring the catheter. One month, menorrhagia; the next, passing over the time, or scanty in quantity. There would be weeks that nothing would pass the bowels, the most drastic purgatives proving harmless, and apparently digesting like the blandest aliment, when a dose of opium would act promptly as a purgative. Then a diarrhœa for days together, that opium and its preparations would increase, but a dose of castor oil would put a stop to at once. She would vomit for hours, and the blandest food would be rejected; but perhaps cold raw cabbage and vinegar, or pickled beets, would be retained, and digest most perfectly. But she was always showing me some curious substance which came from the bowels, or bladder, or vagina, and quite a pretty collection of unique curiosities might have been gathered from her, had some one, who had a taste for such matters, taken pains to preserve them. A ball of hair was voided from the bowels; also a substance like amber, some curious seeds which no one could name, pieces of flesh, a tube like the intestine, a liquid possessing the sensible qualities of urine, milk, blood, inky liquids, globules of quicksilver, sand, pieces of brick, &c. All these substances were at some period of her case voided per anum. A catalogue not less numerous or dissimilar came from the bladder. From the skin there came shining scales, which looked to me like bits of mica, and which she saved and exhibited as some unknown metal that she professed to believe had been given her years ago. I had never seen a case like this before—and as she was a very pious, exemplary girl, I took it for granted that she told me the truth.

Along with the other marvels of her case, black urine was often shown me, and she would go more than a week at a time without once voiding a drop, or there being any secreted. This staggered my belief, I must confess, a good deal; but as I knew of no motive for deceiving me, I reluctantly believed it. The skin would exhibit curiously-colored spots occasionally, sometimes colored off very fancifully. Then a blister, as if a hot substance had been applied, or a strong corrosive material. At length the climax of the case arrived. I was called in great haste to see her, and found the urethra obstructed with a hard substance, which sounded, when the catheter was applied to it, like a calculus. She stated that it had been in the bladder a long time, she was confident. But as it happened, I had been obliged to use the catheter, from time to time, previously, and had even used a male silver instrument for the purpose of exploring the bladder but a short time before, and no stone could be detected. Besides this, the stone was a large rough one, and appeared as if it had entered the urethra from its *external* orifice, instead of from the bladder. As it was only about three fourths of an inch from the meatus, it was readily extracted with a pair of common forceps, when its true nature was perfectly apparent. It was a piece of common slate stone, and its kindred fellow was the hearth stone of her own room! Light broke on me at once. I taxed her with imposing upon me, and her only reply was a violent fit of hysteric grief and anger. It is unnecessary, I presume, to inform the reader that most of her strange and unaccountable symptoms vanished from this time, her health improved, and whatever diseases came upon her after this, were such as could be classified.

I have no doubt that most of the extraordinary phenomena in this case had their solution in some of the ordinary laws of nature. Black urine could easily be shown, as well as bloody. Milk, or ink, or blood, could be mixed with it, and the absence of the urine could be readily feigned. Seeds of plants, also pieces of flesh, gravel, sand and brick-dust, with coal, plaster, &c., could be readily put into the urine and fæces. Quicksilver or its amalgams might have composed the scales of mica &c., which were found on the skin; and hot water, hot irons and other burning substances, might have been used in effecting the appearances of the skin. The object of all this deception was probably to excite pity and compassion, or perhaps to become an object of wonder and notoriety. A morbid pruriency may have also entered into some of her calculations, as manipulations about the genito-urinary apparatus seemed to be specially her object.

It is this class of patients that are so susceptible to the influence of animal magnetism. In truth, I believe mesmerism is only one phase of the complaint, and can be artificially induced in these subjects very easily. I presume catalepsy is another form of it, occurring naturally, for I have known a person who was subject to fits of catalepsy, that could only be roused at pleasure by mesmeric passes, and could be also thrown artificially into the cataleptic state, by mesmeric manipulations, precisely like the natural fit of that disease. A case happened a few years ago that was of this character.

A colored girl, about 20 years of age, fell into a cataleptic state, which greatly alarmed the family in which she lived. She appeared stiff, rigid, and insensible as a piece of statuary. A young gentleman, who was sitting up in the room with her during the night, commenced making frictions on the legs and arms, and while rubbing the arms, from below upwards, he observed that they gradually relaxed, as did the legs also, when she immediately arose, yet with her eyes perfectly closed. In the greatest consternation he left the room, and rushed down stairs, followed by this ebony Venus, who pursued him through doors and passages, with eyes still closed, avoiding all intervening obstacles, as though she saw them perfectly, and it was with the greatest difficulty she could be got back into her room, and not until the young man himself returned, when she followed him readily. She continued to fall into the cataleptic state spontaneously, or by mesmeric passes, and was brought out by reverse passes, until the case began to excite too much notoriety for the comfort and convenience of the family, who had her carried home, and the subsequent history I never knew.

Hysteria, catalepsy, mesmerism, somnambulism, and a number of the hysterical affections, are so nearly allied to each other, that they most probably have something of a kindred origin. The disposition which such persons manifest to deceive themselves and others, is a striking trait in their character. While we should be constantly on our guard against imposition, we should, notwithstanding, treat them kindly, and look on them in the light of diseased beings, physically and morally.

Syracuse, N. Y., Aug. 1, 1849. A. B. SHIPMAN.

SKETCHES OF EMINENT LIVING PHYSICIANS.—NO. IX.

J. K. MITCHELL, M.D., PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE IN JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE.

"For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
Than all the blandishments of sound, his ear,
Than all of taste his tongue."

"So in latest years,
When time thy head with honors shall have cloth'd,
Sacred to every virtue, may thy mind,
Amid the calm review of seasons past,
Fair offices of friendship, or kind peace,
Or public zeal, may then thy mind well pleased
Recall these happy studies of thy prime."—*Akenside.*

SPRUNG from an old Scotch family which early emigrated to the "Old Dominion," Dr. Mitchell combines the graces of the Virginia gentleman, with the shrewdness of his *tartan* ancestry; the keen perception of those who are the Yankees of Great Britain, with the polish of the courtiers of the Charles's, whose descendants now constitute the inhabitants of "Old Virginny."

Having, with hundreds of others of his fellow countrymen, visited Philadelphia, to attend her great Medical Schools and learn the art of healing, he, after obtaining his diploma, sailed on a voyage to India—not, however, before he had wooed and won the heart of one of the fairest of

Philadelphia's fair daughters. He wedded some time afterwards, the heart of the old father having relented, and indeed some time after became otherwise affected. If we are rightly informed, the parents of Dr. M., like those of his friend, Dr. Chapman, and many other distinguished men in our country, belong to the class of the independent yeomanry. Man springs from the dust, and *our* best and strongest men spring from those who cultivate the earth.

Dr. M. may with safety be termed one of our most popular men. His manners, his hospitality, his varied acquirements, and his liberality and general urbanity, point him out as *the* popular man. He has the peculiar art of keeping in the *van* of everything, and of succeeding in every thing he undertakes. Cato's first lessons in human anatomy were drawn from a popular lecture to young men, on this subject, delivered by Dr. M. He remembers it well—the dried specimen of an arm, injected, dried and varnished. Never will he forget the impression that dried specimen made upon his imagination—how he wondered at the curious mechanism of his own frame, as the talented and winning lecturer proceeded to expatiate on that mechanism which induced David to exclaim that man was fearfully and wonderfully made. From the moment of that lecture to the present —now, alas! some twenty years—has the heart and mind of Cato been filled with and searching out some of these wonders, as well as trying to repair the mishaps to which the human frame is continually subject.

Some of the most popular scientific lectures ever delivered in Philadelphia, were those delivered by Dr. M., in the Franklin Institute, from year to year, not upon anatomy, but upon chemistry. I have said that he leads—do not chemists acknowledge his contributions to the domain of chemistry, in his experiments on the *dif*-fusibility of gases, in extension of those of Dutrochet and others on Endosmosis and Exosmosis? These lectures were avowedly delivered to the apprentices, attending the Franklin Institute during the winter season, but were really attended by the fashionable and scientific of our city, on account of the popularity and originality of the lectures. Here, also, in the form of four introductory lectures, he produced those four essays on the so-called four elements of the ancients, Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. These were published in Greenbank's Circulating Library, and elsewhere, and were extensively read. The Medical Institute of Philadelphia, or Chapman's Institute, enjoyed his teaching in the summer season, and at no time have their classes been so large as when Dr. M. lectured. His colleagues, Drs. Harris, Hodge, Mütter, and Jackson, are variously distributed since then. Dr. Harris is at the head of the Medical Bureau in Washington; Drs. Jackson and Hodge are Professors in the University of Pennsylvania; and his *then* young friend, Dr. Mütter, is one of his colleagues in the Jefferson Medical College. Cato has always felt as if Dr. M. ought to have continued his chemical lectures and investigations; he would now certainly have been at the head of that science in this country: but he is like a giant, who, conscious that his strength is above other men's, merely puts forth his hand in a single trial to exhibit his superiority, and then leaves the contest for others.

In politics and poetry it is the same thing. In the first, he was among the first, when no others could be found to preside over political meetings, to give countenance to the Hero of Buena Vista and Monterey. His prescience showed him that that obscure *old Zach.* was to take the lead in the hearts of his countrymen; and from the first he gave the old hero his warmest and most disinterested support, for he has asked nothing, and received nothing from the public crib for his good services. His addresses on these occasions have been models—both as to justness and beauty of conception, fervor of patriotism and propriety of expression. We would not have been at all surprised had the President sent him out of his country, "for his country's good," to France, or England; but this he has not asked, and indeed is above it, both in fortune and feeling.

A volume of poetry, written while, in his own language, he sat in his office as a young man and "waited for practice," attests his powers in this way. He is a member of the Philosophical Society, and indeed of all the scientific and respectable literary societies of Philadelphia; is connected with many in Europe, and contributes, from time to time, to the transactions of them all. His last *brochure* in the medical line, as we all know, is a volume on a new theory of the cause of malaria—that of fungi—an ingeniously and learnedly written essay. It is now going through the fiery ordeal of criticism; but this the amiable author never troubles himself about—he does not write for money, and therefore is not under the necessity of "bending the pregnant hinges of the knee, that thrift may follow fawning." He is not and never was one of those medical sieves, who seem designed simply to allow the thoughts of other men to pass through them, and without even separating the wheat from the chaff. He is one of the working bees, who produce honey for others to feed on. Ever active and disposed to push on the great car of science, he stands ready at any time to receive and examine whatever is put forth as new or interesting in his profession, or connected with it. Even the subject of mesmerism received, at his hands, an impartial examination, and a large number of experiments were made on different classes of individuals to test its value, and the truth or falsity of its statements. A lengthy paper was read before the College of Physicians, by him, on the subject, and subsequently published in the form of a volume. Chloroform and the other anæsthetic agents find in him (the very opposite of his colleague, Dr. Meigs) a warm supporter and friend. Never contented as long as there is any chance of improvement in the practice of medicine, he subjects every new remedy, of any ostensible value, to a fair and candid trial; and at the same time that he is willing to try *new* things, is one who holds fast to all that which is good of the old.

He graduated about the year 1817—and with the exception of the time he was absent on the voyage to India, has enjoyed a large and respectable practice in our city—has been connected with the various Hospitals and Dispensaries of this place, and teaching his profession in one capacity or other ever since. His patrimony, his practice, and his professorship, have made him independent in a pecuniary point of view.

The Jefferson College, founded by Dr. George McClellan and his confrères about the year 1820, was re-organized a few years ago, on the resignation of Professors Pattison and Revere (who subsequently occupied chairs in the New York University), by the election of Drs. Mitchell, Bache and Mütter, to the several chairs of Practice, Chemistry and Surgery. Dr. Mitchell is not the least popular of the popular professors of this school, and has been able, amid all the bickerings which must necessarily accompany the clashing of the interests of old and new cliques and associations, to retain that gentlemanly and friendly bearing towards the old faculty, which is so characteristic of him in all his relations in life.—His motto appears to be, "to bear and forbear;" at the same time, some of the medical gentlemen of this city can testify that the Old Dominion has not sent him here without the power to defend himself to the death, if needs be.

A goodly family of intelligent children, sons and daughters, are growing up around him; numerous friends, among all classes, encompass him; and there is no prospect of fickle fortune ever forsaking him. About five feet six and a half inches high—a handsome, broad, manly face—a large head, well covered with black hair, which is just beginning to be sprinkled by the blossoms of the almond tree—a well-set person, thoroughly and compactly built—with a light business-like walk, a cordial and friendly address, the latter emanating from a real kindness of heart—clothed generally in plain black cloth and white vest—driving one, sometimes two, beautiful sorrel horses—and we have Dr. J. K. Mitchell. His mode of lecturing, with a voice as soft and sweet as a young girl's, is entirely conversational; very few pretensions to oratorical flourish, either in gesture, voice or composition. His composition on general topics is distinguished by the justness and propriety of his figures, his mode of reasoning being, like that of most of the distinguished *practitioners* in our profession, by analogy. Hence, in our opinion, a good practical physician is a good deal of a poet; abstract reasoning not being applicable to the daily routine of practice.

But we must close—

> "Since brevity 's the soul of wit,
> And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes."

Cato.

THE MEDICAL PROPERTIES OF SULPHUR.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

It is unnecessary to speak of the physical appearance of this substance. So common is the article, that it is known to almost every one. It is simply with its medical properties we have to deal. Sulphur has long been known as a medicine, and has a place in our oldest Dispensatories. It can be made to unite with many other substances, changing materially their medical qualities and physical appearance. Pure Sulphur possesses various medical qualities. It is a laxative, and has important diaphoretic, diuretic and alterative properties. When given in doses from a scruple to a drachm, it operates as a laxative. Whether its laxative powers depend upon the mechanical effect which it exerts upon the stomach and bowels, or upon its chemical action, I am not to decide; but probably upon both. When taken in the above mentioned doses, it moves the bowels gently and efficiently, without griping. I have found its efficacy very manifest in costive habits, arising from inaction of the bowels, and especially if accompanied with hemorrhoidal difficulties. In such cases, it quickens the intestinal circulation, gives muscular tone to the bowels, and restores peristaltic action. Hence, as a laxative it has no superior, and few equals, in my estimation, in all cases of the above description. Sulphur is more efficacious as a laxative, in some cases, when combined with other medicines. I have found it much more so in rheumatism when combined with gum guaiac. and colchicum. In this combination not only are its laxative powers more manifest, but its diaphoretic and diuretic qualities greatly increased, and I know of no aperient that equals this combination, in the above disease. I have frequently administered the following in rheumatism, with great success:—

R. Sulphur, - - ℥ ij.
Pulv. G. Guaiac,
" Radex Colchic. - āā ℈j.

Mix and divide into eight equal parts; give one every four hours, until the bowels are thoroughly moved. After this, one may be used night and morning, or as the case may require. I have sometimes used the above combination in spirits, preferring gin, especially if there was a suppression of urine. When used in the spirituous form, I usually add one ounce of serpentaria—using the above quantity to a pint of spirits, and giving it in doses of a tablespoonful three times a day.

I have not only found this useful in all arthritic complaints, but also in neuralgia and some cutaneous diseases. It will answer a better purpose in acute arthritis, if used in the form of powder; but in cachectic habits, and especially where there is a depraved state of the functions of assimilation, as is indicated by biles and other eruptions upon the surface, the alcoholic preparation will succeed best. In all cutaneous affections, where the bowels are required to be kept gently open, sulphur is a valuable medicine. In cutaneous affections where there is want of urinary secretion, as there almost always is, it will be found more efficacious, if combined with cream of tartar.

In dyspepsia, accompanied with a weak, relaxed state of the stomach and intestines, sulphur, combined with small doses of cayenne and ipecac, taken three times a day before eating, will prove almost a specific. Where there is an inactive state of the liver, accompanied, as it generally is, by an indolent state of the bowels, sulphur, with calc. magnesia and a decoction of dandelion and wild cherry tree bark, will speedily remove the disease. In all cases where the cutaneous function is disordered, sulphur is a valuable medicine—for, in the quaint language of an old author, "pure sulphur loosens the belly, and promotes insensible perspiration." It passes through the whole habit, and manifestly transpires through the pores of the skin, as appears from the sulphurous smell of persons having taken it, and from silver being stained of a black color in their pockets, which is the known effect of sulphur.

In all mucous membranal diseases, as well as cutaneous, sulphur is a valuable medicine. It is valuable in these cases from the diaphoretic, diuretic and laxative qualities which it possesses. It may possess other qualities that render it useful in these diseases. Its beneficial influence in these disorders, indicates clearly the analogous structure that exists between the skin and mucous membrane. In mucous membranal disease of the lungs, it will prove more efficacious if combined with antimony, mercury, and opium; and it is singular how it changes and modifies the operation of these medicines. This effect is spoken of in the Edinburgh Dispensatory, and is there attributed to its laxative powers; but I think it is from the chemical change it induces.

In mucous membranal disease of the bowels, sulphur, combined with cream of tartar and other refrigerant salts, is very useful. It seems to exert a wonderful influence over the functions of assimilation, and it is in this way, I imagine, that it proves so serviceable in all disorders of the cutaneous function, when taken internally. It certainly possesses a wonderful influence over diseases of this function, whether they exist locally or from a constitutional cause. I have often been surprised at the beneficial influence, in salt rheum, of a combination of fl. sulphur, tar, and mutton tallow, in the proportion of equal parts, simmered together in the form of an ointment. After having tried various local applications, and constitutional agents, with no benefit whatever, I have succeeded in effecting a perfect cure, in a few days, by the application of this ointment, two or three times a day, and with a few doses of cream tartar and sulphur.—And so with other itching and eruptive diseases.

Sulphur was formerly used in coughs to a considerable extent, and with good effect; but it has quite gone into disuse for this purpose, except among farriers, who use it in coughs of horses and other animals, with good success. In the horse I have used it with good success, combined with crude antimony, in the proportion of ½ ℔ of antimony to 1 ℔ of sulphur—mix and give a tablespoonful of this mixture, in oats or meal, three times a day.

I have used sulphur in hooping cough with good effect, in combination with sanguinaria. I have found it useful in catarrhal coughs of winter, especially in such children as are troubled with worms.

I have used sulphur in chlorosis with decided advantage. I attribute the beneficial influence which it exerts upon this disease, to the healthy action it establishes in the assimilative functions.

Sulphur, charcoal, and calc. magnesia, equal parts, form a valuable aperient, in this disease.

I have never used sulphur in the form of the vapor-bath, to any very great extent. I have no doubt, however, of its utility, from what I have observed of its external operation, especially in cutaneous affections, rheumatism, scrofula, and other kindred diseases. I know a highly intelligent lady who was afflicted with scrofula, to a very great extent. She was subjected to a thorough course of mercury, together with iodine and saline medicines, with no benefit whatever, but was finally fully restored by the use of the above bath.

Sulphur has lately been proclaimed a specific for the cholera. In reference to its powers as a preventive or curative medicine, in this disease, I am unable to speak, never having used it in cholera. I have no doubt that, taken in laxative doses, by clearing the prima viæ and exciting the glandular secretions, thereby keeping the digestive organs in a healthy condition, it might *prevent* cholera; but that, taken occasionally, it would render the system insusceptible to a deleterious atmosphere, is very doubtful.

Sulphur ointment was formerly much used in the treatment of psora. It has been considered a specific in this disease. The disagreeable odor of sulphur, and its former use in the itch, have created a popular prejudice against it, as a medicine, and this is one reason why it has fallen into such general disuse. FENNER H. PECKHAM, M.D.

North Killingly, Ct., July 27, 1849.

PALMER'S ARTIFICIAL LEG.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

AMONG the improvements that have been made in the mechanic arts, there is none of recent origin that reflects more credit upon its author than that of Palmer's artificial leg. His invention is beyond a doubt vastly superior to any that has preceded it, either in Europe or America; indeed, so perfect is its adaptation to the purpose for which it was intended, there seems to be no room left for improvement. It differs so widely from all others that have gone before it, in its mechanism, and particularly in the construction of its joints, as to entitle it to the name of an invention rather than an improvement. Its superiority consists, first, in its being lighter, at the same time that it has sufficient strength and durability. Second, in the more easy and perfect play of the joints, which, together with its natural spring or elasticity—another quality it possesses in distinction from all others—enables the wearer to walk with ease and freedom, and gives to the foot and leg the same motions as those of the natural limb. And lastly, in its superior workmanship. His model, which is a fac simile of those he manufactures to order, so nearly resembles the natural limb in appearance, in the symmetry of its form, in the natural contour and perfect play of the joints, and in its life-like motions when in use, that those who have lost an upper extremity have applied to him to furnish them with an artificial hand and arm, and after examining his model we were not surprised to learn that he is having constant applications of this sort.

Mr. Palmer himself, who wears a leg of his own construction, with an artificial joint at the knee, is enabled to walk without halting, and in a manner which would lead no one unacquainted with the fact to suspect that he was not walking upon a sound natural limb.

The firm of B. F. Palmer & Co., for the manufacture of these limbs, has recently been removed from Meredith, N. H., to this town, which enables us to testify to the entire satisfaction they have given to several individuals who have just been supplied from this establishment, on some of whom amputation had been performed above, and on others below, the knee. They all testify to the ease with which they are worn, by which they are enabled, after having worn them for a short time, to walk several miles in succession without pain or inconvenience.

It is for the benefit of those who have had the misfortune to lose a leg, not less than for the encouragement of the inventor and the manufacturers, who are deserving of their patronage, and who we regard as their greatest benefactors, that we make these statements.

JEFFERSON CHURCH, M.D., JAS. M. SMITH, M.D., N. ADAMS, M.D., ALFRED LAMBERT, M.D., EDWIN SEEGER, M.D., R. G. W. ENGLISH, M.D., O. C. CHAFFEE, M.D.

Springfield, June 15, 1845.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, AUGUST 15, 1849.

Medical Independence.—A medical gentleman of Boston, whose social position and professional prospects would be regarded as enviable by most medical aspirants, has recently taken *Dr.* off his door plate, with a determination to be no longer subjected to the beck, call and caprice of the public. He has made the discovery, that high literary and scientific attainments, combined with a conscientious zeal in keeping pace with the progress of medical discovery, with a view to making one's self useful to men, women and children, when they are sick, is not at all appreciated. A blustering, low minded fellow, who has nothing to lose and every thing to gain, without a claim to patronage on the score of exact medical knowledge, is taken into favor by the multitude, while real worth, both in character and medical skill, is neglected, if not wholly abandoned.

An opinion is prevalent, that a physician, who is a writer, must be a poor practitioner; therefore, an author, however distinguished, cannot compete with a neighbor who may not be able to write his mother tongue grammatically. It follows, that ignorance, of a certain kind, facilitates one's success—it being presumed, on this theory, that to be a good practitioner of medicine, is incompatible with thorough scholarship;—in other words, a man cannot be successful in both, and hence the public sentiment, to an extraordinary extent, is decidedly in favor of a physician who does not trouble himself with books, or divert his mind from the grave consideration of visiting patients, by interesting himself in the details of science.

Revolving Tooth Key.—Mr. Smilie, of South Reading, an ingenious dentist, of rare promise—a brother of Dr. E. R. Smilie, who has contributed largely to the modern stock of beautiful and useful surgical instruments—has produced a new device for extracting teeth, which deserves the close examination of practising dentists. The new and essential feature is the construction of the fulcrum, attached to the common bar. The hook may be turned to any angle, and from one side to the other, without altering a screw. Next, the face of the fulcrum, which comes in contact with the gum, is covered by a broad spring, that yields, as the power is exerted at the handle, and the tooth is thus raised nearly perpendicularly from its socket, while violence to the alveolar wall is avoided by the wide, elastic surface of the spring, pressed along the arch. Dentists, alone, must decide upon the utility of this improvement; and if it passes their ordeal favorably, the inventor will have numerous orders for specimens.

Health of Saratoga.—Dr. North, resident at the Springs, sends the following note respecting the good health of the place. It should have been inserted last week.

To the Editor. Dear Sir,—I quite regret my negligence in not keeping your readers acquainted with the state of our health in this village. Knowing, as I did, that they *must* assume responsibility, either whether they advise their patients to visit us or object to it, I was bound to disclose fully and unreservedly to them from whom I have received so many friendly commissions, the real condition of Saratoga. It is probably known to all that we had, in the early part of summer, five or six weeks ago, a number of sudden deaths, both of strangers and citizens. Of the origin and history of this sickness, I hope, before long, to furnish an account for your pages. I only say now, and I say it responsibly to my medical brethren, that I have never known Saratoga more profoundly healthy than during the past four or five weeks. The village is remarkably quiet, far from being crowded, and the waters are operating upon invalids in the usual manner. Indeed, the panic, which, in the fore part of summer, restrained citizens and strangers from going to the Springs in the morning, is a thing *that was*, and no patient seems to hesitate, under the direction of the faculty, in making a free and bold use of his accustomed potations at the fountains. With respect, M. L. North.

Saratoga Springs, July 28, 1849.

Lowell Hospital.—A report, embracing a period from 1840 to 1849, made to the Trustees in June last—the first ever published, to our knowledge—is now before the world. Gilman Kimball, M.D., the medical officer, has quietly rendered a large amount of surgical as well as medical service, and the unobtrusive course he appears to have pursued is worthy both of commendation and imitation. In nine years, 1464 patients left the hospital cured; 75, relieved; 11, not relieved; and 77 died. Of the whole number, 816 were cases of typhoid fever. Dr. Kimball has no assistant physician, neither are the patients visited by pupils. It must be conceded, therefore, that he is emphatically a working man. Lowell is a great manufacturing city, although comparatively young, in which charitable institutions are already fostered with a degree of munificence that reflects honor on the inhabitants at this early age of their municipal existence.

Pennsylvania College.—By the new circular, announcing the prospects and capabilities of the medical department of this College, it evidently possesses the means of accomplishing all that is promised. There are nine professors, gentlemen of known powers, who are ambitious of raising the institution to a level with the older schools of medicine in Philadelphia.

Smithsonian Institution.—The editor acknowledges, with much gratification, the receipt of a copy of the reports, &c., of the Smithsonian institution, exhibiting its plans, operations and financial condition, up to Jan. 1, 1849, from the third annual report of the Board of Regents, presented to Congress in February last. Cultivators of science may learn by this document precisely the objects contemplated by the donor. Prof. Henry's programme of the organization, gives a clear idea of what is intended to be accomplished; and Prof. Jewett's report relative to the library, is a valuable dissertation on the importance of collecting books. All the apparatus used by Dr. Hare in the University of Pennsylvania, were a gift from the owner to the Smithsonian Institution.

Report of Cholera in Paris.—This report, which was published in 1832, by authority of the French government, and recently translated in New York by F. Barthelemy, meets with the hearty approval of Drs. Buck, Buel, Phillips, Paul and Bolton, a select committee of the New York Academy of Medicine, and a resolution was passed in the Sanitary Board of that city, authorizing a subscription for two hundred copies for the use of the Corporation. It appears hardly necessary to particularize the contents of this treatise, the marrow of which has been repeatedly drawn out by the Journals. It embraces an accurate examination into the invasion of cholera and its subsequent progress in Paris. In short, it is a history of the epidemic from first to last, and is, therefore, an excellent work to consult.

Mortality of the City.—Our weekly report of to-day (ending last Saturday at noon), presents a bill of mortality which in Boston was never before equalled in numbers. The deaths by cholera, it will be seen, have considerably increased since the previous week. They are still chiefly confined, however, to foreigners, and to the most crowded portions of the city inhabited by them. Exclusive of these, the mortality of the city is not very greatly increased—the fatal cases of our usual summer complaints being but a few more than during the corresponding week of last year. Of the whole number of deaths in this report, 43 were at the House of Industry, Deer Island Hospital and other city institutions. Americans, 71; foreigners and children of foreigners, 169.

Medical Miscellany.—Mrs. Sibbillah Dexter died at New Braintree, Mass., at the age of 100 years.—Sickness still prevails alarmingly at Havana. All vessels from the principal ports in the United States are subjected to a rigid quarantine at Cuba.—Cholera is fast abating West. It has prevailed so generally in the United States that it is nearly impossible to furnish an accurate record of its fatality.—A catalogue of the Western Reserve College includes the names of a formidable list of medical students.—Cholera is said to be creeping into Havana. It would make sad havoc with the people of that great smoking city, should it exhibit its usual activity among persons of low habits, or, rather, no habits at all.—New Orleans is represented now to be one of the healthiest cities in the Union.—The cholera hospital in Boston appears to be better organized, and more order prevails in it, than in any one on the sea-border.—Several physicians have recently fallen by the cholera at the West.—Medical schools are actively notifying the public of their preparations for the autumnal lectures.—The congress of men of science commenced a session yesterday, at the University in Cambridge. Strangers wishing to witness the proceedings, can take omnibus passage from Brattle street, in Boston, almost every hour of the day, the distance being only three miles.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Dr. Mack's notice of his remedy in cholera, and an Old Subscriber's queries respecting the homœopathic treatment of the same disease, together with much editorial matter, are crowded out of to-day's Journal.—It is unnecessary to direct the reader's attention to Prof. Shipman's curious cases in this number. We trust he will find time to draw up a full report of the other case alluded to by him.—We shall be pleased to receive reports of the cases referred to in a letter from Dr. B., of Georgia.

MARRIED,—At Elliot, Me., Dr. Samuel Willis to Miss P. Fogg.

DIED,—At Blande Co., N. C., Dr. Wm. S. Andres, 31.—In Maine, Dr. Wilson, of cholera.

Report of Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Saturday, August 11th, 240.—Males, 122—females, 118.—Of apoplexy, 3—cholera, 94—convulsions, 3—hæmorrhage, 1—canker, 3—dysentery, 20—diarrhœa, 9—dropsy, 3—inflammation of the bowels, 2—cholera infantum, 4—dropsy on the brain, 8—cholera morbus, 4—consumption, 11—croup, 2—disease of the bowels, 33—debility, 2—disease of the heart, 1—marasmus, 4—hooping cough, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 2—measles, 1—infantile diseases, 10—lung fever, 3—brain fever, 1—typhus fever, 2—scarlet fever, 1—bilious fever, 1—pleurisy, 1—suicide, 1—teething, 3—sudden, 3—ulcers on stomach, 1—suffocation, 1—tumor, 1.

Under 5 years, 87—between 5 and 20 years, 35—between 20 and 40 years, 63—between 40 and 60 years, 46—over 60 years, 9.

Philadelphia College of Medicine—Regular Graduates—Commencement, July 14th.—Geo. W. Mason, Philadelphia; Richard Hutchison, Canada; John W. M'Mahon, Philadelphia; Joses B. S. Holmes, Georgia; Henry I. Gibson, South Carolina; Charles Murphy, South Carolina; Theodore G. Wormley, Pa.; John S. Houghton, Mass.; James H. Bryant, Louisiana; John H. Alday, Bahamas; John W. Staggers, South Carolina; James T. Rowand, Philadelphia; James B. D. Ickes, Pa; Paul Brewer, Pa.; James L. Gihon, Philadelphia; James Waite, Pa.; Joseph F. Berg, Louis W. Evans, Julius Schueren, Samuel P. Vondersmith, Benjamin F. Buffington, Philadelphia. The *ad eundem* degree was conferred on John F. Sanford, M.D., of Iowa, Professor of Surgery in Rock Island Medical College. The honorary degree was conferred on Dr. John S. Babbs, Indianapolis, Indiana; Dr. Joseph Fithian, Woodbury, N. J.; and Dr. Leonard M. Fitch, Boston, Mass.

Mortality in Cincinnati.—From the 16th of June to the 16th of July, a period of 31 days, the aggregate mortality in that city, from all diseases, was *three thousand six hundred and eighteen*, making, in round numbers, a daily average mortality for the time embraced, of *one hundred and seventeen.*

The weekly mortality for the whole of the above period, is as follows:

First three days, to June 18, 138. First week, to June 25, 568. Second week, to July 2, 940. Third week, to July 9, 1,022. Fourth week, to July 16, 950. Total, 3,618.

In Cincinnati, as elsewhere, the mortality from cholera and other diseases occurring coetaneously with it, has been greatest among the foreign population. This population in that city is nearly one-third of the whole number of its inhabitants, but almost three-fourths of the entire number of deaths is from this class of the population.—*Western Journal.*

Lemon-Juice in Rheumatism.—Mr. Middleton stated to the Medical Society of London that he had lately tried, with much advantage, the use of lemon-juice in cases of acute rheumatism. These cases possessed the usual characteristics of the disease, and in some instances were secondary attacks. In some of the cases, the first attack had lasted several weeks before the acute symptoms had been relieved. Under the influence of lemon-juice, however, the pain was usually much mitigated, and in some instances removed in a few hours. He administered a purgative in the first instance, and then gave half an ounce of lemon-juice every four hours. As he had usually given alkalies with benefit in cases of a similar description, he was at a loss to understand how lemon-juice could act so beneficially.—Dr. Golding Bird said the cases mentioned by Mr. Middleton evinced no paradox in regard to the treatment of rheumatism by alkalies and acid; for the lemon-juice and the carbonate of soda were essentially the same in their effects upon the system. There was a *materia morbi* in the blood, which, as the disease receded, was relieved by being carried off by the kidneys, a larger and larger quantity of solids being found in the urine. He had, in his own practice, been in the habit of employing the acetate of potash in these cases. This salt, with a mixture of sugar, water, and essence of lemon, acted with marvellous rapidity. In addition to this, given every four hours, he administered five grains of the soap pill, with opium, night and morning; for this not only relieved pain, but prevented the other remedy being carried off by the bowels. These, with the vapor-bath, constituted his treatment of rheumatism, and the result had been always successful.—*London Lancet.*